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# U. of Oklahoma Reviews Ties To Group With Missionary Link

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NORMAN, Okla.—The University of Oklahoma is reviewing its link to the Summer Institute of Linguistics, which has close ties to the evangelical missionary Wycliffe Bible Translators.

A university professor has charged that institute members have been using the university as a front for proselytizing. A spokesman for the institute has denied that, but acknowledges most institute instructors do religious work.

John Moore, chairman of the anthropology department at the University of Oklahoma, said the institute's zealous evangelical work with the Cheyenne Indians—in the name of the university—hurt his own scientific work with the tribe.

Moore said institute members claim "they are linguists until the point where they get the trust of the Indian group, and then they begin to proselytize." The Indians, many of whom already are Christians, were bitter about the aggressive attempts to convert them to Wycliffe fundamentalism, he said.

Wycliffe was established in 1934 at

Camp Wycliffe, Ark., to translate the Bible into every spoken language. In 1942 it formed the Summer Institute of Linguistics to allow its translators to work with governments and state-supported institutions.

The institute, whose instructors are widely considered among the best trained linguists in the country, has been associated with the University of Oklahoma since 1942 and also does research and teaching at the universities of North Dakota, Texas and Oregon.

At Oklahoma, the institute sponsors linguistics courses during the summer. The university recognizes institute-hired teachers as adjunct faculty and provides university credit for the group's offerings.

Institute spokesman David Bendor-Samuel said the institute does legitimate language research, but Oklahoma anthropology professor Paul Minnis said the university's association with the institute injures reputations of other professors.

He said both Wycliffe and the institute are well known throughout the world for zealous missionary work and that the summer institute's association with the state

university violates constitutional requirements for separation of church and state.

Oklahoma's faculty senate has appointed a committee to investigate the institute.

Bendor-Samuel said the institute and Wycliffe are closely related but not the same. He said most institute instructors belong to Wycliffe, but are not required to. Wycliffe is responsible for raising money, mostly from religious groups, for the institute's work. Some institute funding also comes from government grants.

The institute's work abroad is done on invitation of governments. However, from 1976 to 1981 the institute lost contracts to work in Nigeria, Nepal, Brazil, Panama, Mexico and Ecuador. An institute worker in Colombia was killed by rebels in 1981. The guerrillas claimed the institute was a front for the CIA.

Bendor-Samuel said that at Oklahoma, the institute makes "every attempt to make sure all of our staff keep their religious beliefs outside the field of instruction. Our emphasis is on providing the Bible to everybody without any reference to their religion or their denomination."